



**State of South Carolina**  
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**State – Local Partnership Helps Seniors Avoid Eviction**

**(Columbia, S.C. -)** With fuel costs for home heating expected to skyrocket this winter, a new program sponsored by the South Carolina State Housing Authority and the Lt. Governor's Office on Aging may offer a ray of hope to seniors who find themselves overwhelmed and facing eviction.

In Anderson, Cherokee, Greenville, Oconee, Pickens and Spartanburg counties, applications for one-time rental assistance are currently being taken at the Appalachia Area Agency on Aging. People who are interested in the program should contact Tiwanda Simpkins, the AAA's Information, Referral and Assistance Specialist, at (864) 242-9733 or 1-800-434-4036 for more information. The program was made possible by a \$1,000,000 grant from the Housing Authority to the Lt. Governor's Office on Aging, and is intended to help low-income seniors who are struggling financially regain some financial stability.

Program managers hope the cash assistance available from the Housing Authority fund will help keep families and households intact. Once an applicant has been approved, a check is cut directly to the applicant's landlord for a month's rent – up to \$1000 dollars. Another goal of the project is for the I & R Specialist to identify other services or programs that may help the applicants in other ways.

"It's a great opportunity that we've been given by State Housing," said Jennifer Hall, Program Manager in the Lt. Governor's Office on Aging. "This one-time rental assistance for these folks that qualify is just crucial to keep them in their homes, but what we're finding is that the application process itself is bringing a lot of seniors into contact with the IR & A Specialist program, and that's just a fantastic resource for seniors and their families in every county."

Applicants to the Rental Assistance program must be aged 60 or older and meet income guidelines of 100% of the federal poverty level to qualify for assistance. That amount is \$9,570 for an individual, \$12,830 for a couple and more for larger households.

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